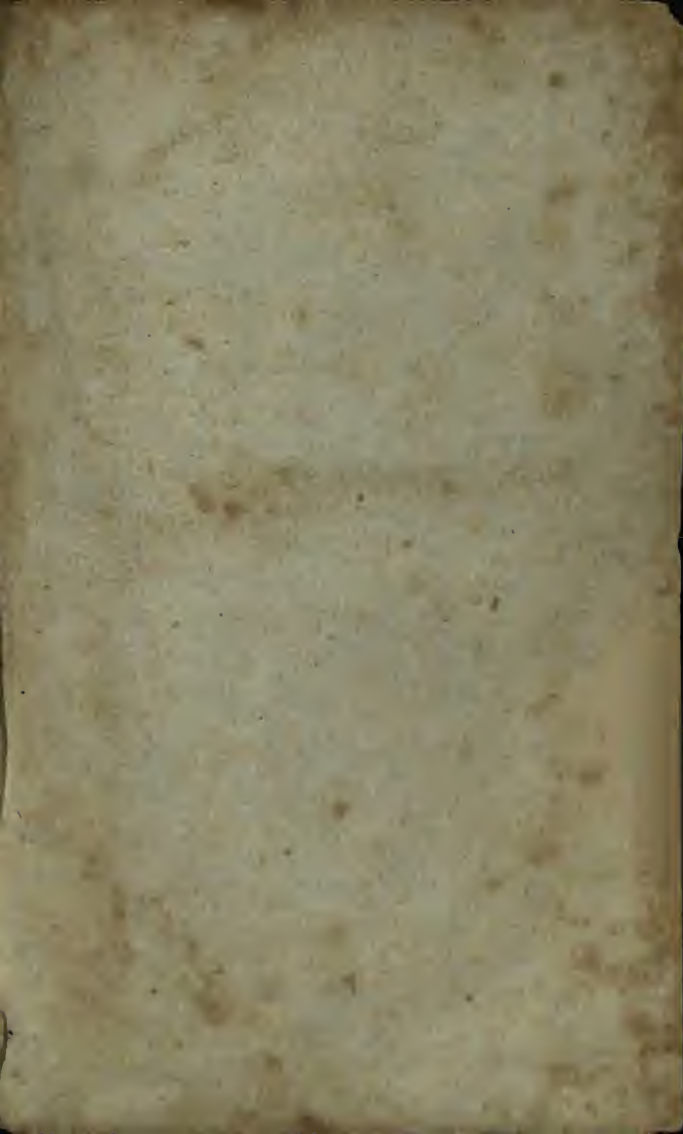


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SUSANNAH;

OR,

# THE THREE GUARDIANS



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THE JARDIN DE L'ÉPIQUE

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1772

PAR M. DE LA HARPE

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# **SUSANNAH;**

OR,

## **THE THREE GUARDIANS.**



### **CHAPTER I.**

I AM now an elderly woman, and can look back on the days of my childhood and youth, and form something like a true opinion of the different errors into which the various guardians of my early days fell, in their management of me; and also to feel the value of that good conduct and prudence in the last of my Instructresses, whereby I was redeemed, humanly speaking, from the consequences of these errors.

I was born of creditable parents, who dying when I was about four years of age, left me under the charge of three guardians, two of whom were my uncles by marrying my father's sisters, and the third the husband of my mother's sister.

I have no recollection of my mother, who died some time before my father; but of my last dear parent I have some faint remembrance, though the circumstances of his death

and the time of his ceasing to be with me, are blotted from my memory. A few years ago, however, when I visited the place in which he lived and where I was born, I seemed to recollect the trees and fields which surround the house, as one recollects things seen only in a dream. Yet with these remembrances, my father's image was so closely connected, that I fancied a thousand circumstances belonging to him, all of a tender and pleasing nature; neither do I know to this moment whether those images which arose before my mind on that occasion were wholly the effect of fancy, or the result of things which really happened, and had left their faint and indistinct traces on my memory; but be this as it may, the first circumstance which I can distinctly recollect, was finding myself living under the care of my mother's sister above mentioned, in a small country town, and subjected at times to the care of an elderly servant, for whom I had no great relish.

My uncle, Dr. Warner, was a physician, and my aunt was a grave, sensible, and conscientious woman, and generally supposed to be one of the persons in the world most proper to have the care of children; and as she had no family of her own, I have no doubt that every one thought I was a most fortunate little girl to have fallen into such able hands.

My aunt's house was the perfection of old-fashioned neatness. I fancy, even now, that I can see the iron gates and railings which enclosed the little court, so neatly paved and weeded so carefully, which extended itself before the front of the house; and I have cause also to recollect the bright and shining floor of oak in the dining parlour, by reason of the many bumps and tumbles, together with the sundry rebukes which it cost me during the first years of my residence with my aunt.

Whether my aunt was older than my mother by many years, I cannot say; but this I know, that I considered her always as a very old person indeed; for her manner was stiff, her face long, her complexion pale, and her countenance susceptible of so few changes that I could seldom distinguish whether she was pleased or displeased; with all this I believe her to have been a well-intentioned person, and decidedly correct and upright in her conduct, as far as it respected her fellow creatures. I may also add, that I think she had many good and just notions on the subject of religion; though she was far from being the person who could make it attractive in the eyes of youth.

I was about four years of age when I entered my aunt's house, and remained with her till my tenth year, and during that pe-

ried I led a life of the most perfect sameness which can possibly be conceived, in a scene so variable as that of the present world.

I slept in a small light closet, within my aunt's room, into which I was bolted every night, precisely as the clock struck eight, and never set at liberty till about seven the next morning; being thus condemned to about eleven hours of perfect solitude, and having no other occupation for those portions of my time which I did not spend in sleep, but in looking out from my window on a wide church-yard, which spread itself before me, immediately beyond the iron railings of which I have spoken above. As I had little notion, at that time, of that bright and glorious world which the eye of faith lays open beyond the grave, it may be supposed that my meditations on the church-yard were not always of the most enlivening nature, nor particularly well calculated to render my hours of retirement agreeable; however, though I once or twice ventured to hint to my aunt's maid, Mrs. Judy Griffin, some of my feelings on these occasions, and to say that I should be most thankful to be allowed to share the housemaid's bed, or at least not to be bolted into my closet, no attention was paid to my feelings; and I was told that I was a naughty girl, and ought to have no other thought but that of an entire submission to my aunt's will.



When my door was opened at seven o'clock in the morning, I was allowed to come into my aunt's bed-room, where I spent at least an hour and a half at my needle, waiting for my breakfast, while the good lady went through the various duties of the toilet, which I have since considered might have been expedited in at least one sixth part of the time; but my aunt was one of those excellent persons who maintain, that it is impossible to be neat unless a large portion of time is taken up in combing, brushing, pinning, and turning round before a looking-glass.

I never recollect, that on any of these occasions my aunt noticed me but to find fault with something in my dress, person, or manner; and the best I had to expect was that she would not notice me at all.

At half after eight we breakfasted; but unfortunately, my uncle had discovered, or thought he had discovered, that no breakfast was so suitable to the constitution of a child as porridge, and therefore to porridge I was condemned, though I had a particular aversion to it, and would have preferred a piece of dry bread and a glass of water. It was needful, however, that I should take something; and as the tea and hot rolls, with which my aunt and uncle regaled themselves were forbidden to me, I used to swallow my porridge as speedily as I could, and spend the

rest of the time appointed for the meal, in thinking how much toast and butter, and what sweet tea I should have when I was grown up, and had a house of my own: and if an opportunity afforded I would slip out of the parlour after breakfast and persuade the footman to give me a morsel of the interdicted roll. My reader, if he understands human nature, will not be surprised at my having often attempted so to do, although I knew that it might cost me two or three untruths to conceal this misdemeanour.

When my comfortless breakfast was finished, my uncle always went out, and I was placed in the corner of the room in stocks, and with dumb bells in my hands, whilst my aunt made some family arrangements. My aunt was not often absent on these occasions more than half an hour; but sometimes when difficulties arose in any of the departments of the offices, she would perhaps forget me, and leave me much longer; nevertheless she still expected to find me always where she had left me, and in case of my having made my escape, I was made subject to sundry penalties, which I have not now leisure to enumerate. It was generally ten o'clock when my aunt returned to the parlour, and then the dumb bells were to be relinquished, and I was made to stand by the working table for two hours, learning long columns of

spelling, and sundry catechisms, of which I did not understand a single sentence.

From twelve to one I was subjected to the instructions of a writing master, a grave old man. I do not recollect that I ever saw a smile on the countenance of this worthy man, for such I believe he was, as he executed his part by me, in a faithful, conscientious manner, though he not seldom brought me into disgrace with my aunt, by complaining that Miss would not dot her i's, and by expatiating on the perversity, and sundry other evil qualities of youth. When the bell of the church struck one, I was allowed to play; but the field of my recreations was so very small, and so many eyes were constantly upon me from the parlour and kitchen windows, that it will not be imagined that my gambols and sports were of the most enlivening kind. I was seldom allowed to go beyond the little square court in front of the house, and it was not often that I entered this scene of amusement, but as I before remarked, I was saluted from one or other of the windows with some words of reproof or caution, either from my aunt or Mrs. Judy Griffin.

At two I was called in and dressed in my silk slip, gauze bib and apron, and made to sit very upright, whilst my aunt and uncle enjoyed their dinner; for, as far as I was concerned, I had little enjoyment of any of my



meals. My uncle, in his medical capacity, had made many discoveries concerning the unwholesomeness of almost every kind of food of which I was particularly fond, inso-much that had I not had friends in the house-  
maid and footman, I should have stood a very great chance of having my growth stopped for want of proper nourishment.

My uncle and aunt generally sat long at their meals, and what was worse by far to me, they also sat a long while after dinner, and I was required to sit with them; an observance which I found so particularly irksome, that I inwardly resolved, if ever I should live to grow up and have a house of my own, I would never sit at the table a moment after dinner.

When my uncle left the dining room I was generally called to my needle, and seldom allowed to leave it till tea was brought in; and with the tea, that which was even worse to me than porridge, namely, a newspaper, which, in the absence of my uncle, I was compelled to read aloud to my aunt, that is, if we had no visitors; for it was a very common custom of my relations to finish the evening with a game at cards, on which occasion, if I could not get out into the kitchen, I was made to hem, darn, or stitch, at the corner of the card-table; and thus my time wore away till the sad moment arrived when

I was committed to my closet for the night. Such was the general course of my day; and in this manner passed the first five years of my life, after my father's death, the seventh day bringing me little relief; the views then given me of religion being only calculated to add superstitious horrors and gloomy fears to the other unpleasant circumstances of my situation.

My reader may, perhaps, wish to know the effect of this mode of life upon my mind; and I will endeavour to give him the satisfaction which he may require.

My character was naturally lively, and my feelings strong. I can remember in the earlier period of my residence with my aunt Warner, that I often rebelled, and was highly and openly indignant at being made to suffer so many privations; but after a while I suppose that I became stupid; for I remember no breakings out of passion, but a constant and habitual feeling of dissatisfaction, and a fixed determination of throwing off the yoke as soon as possible, and of breaking through every regulation by which I had been conducted in infancy. My mind was continually filled with the ideas of what I would do when I was my own mistress; and I was even then always on the watch to act in a manner contrary to my guardian's wishes, whenever I thought I could do it with impunity. In con-

sequence of all this, I became habitually artful, and when set at liberty for a moment, was wild and boisterous in the extreme. I was anxious and greedy respecting food, and stood at no means of obtaining what I desired, by fraud; with all this, however, I had some sense of right and wrong; I knew very well when I was doing amiss, and had frequent sharp pangs of conscience. If I did not love my aunt, I was not wholly without feelings of respect for her; and I sometimes wished that I could live without deceiving her.

Such was my state, to the best of my recollection, when I entered my tenth year, at which time certain events took place which made an entire change in my situation.

My aunt had never appeared to be a healthy person; and about this period she became worse, and without having any particular disease, as far as could be ascertained, gradually languished, and was at length laid on her bed, from which she never rose again.



## CHAPTER II.

I STAYED with my uncle Warner only a few days after my aunt's funeral; but being under Mrs. Judy's instruction I experienced little relief from my former thraldoms; and as my

uncle was much from home, my situation was very far from being ameliorated; but at the end of this time, I heard that I was to go to the house of Mrs. Talbot, my father's eldest sister, then residing beyond London; and I was told I was to be put into a chaise, and that Mrs. Judy was to accompany me to my new home. "And shall I see London, and the tower, and the lions?" I said to Mrs. Judy, who had opened the important information to me.

You will see what is proper for you to see Miss, replied Mrs. Judy.

Is my uncle Talbot a Doctor? I asked.

No, said Mrs. Judy, drawing herself up, he is nothing but a Captain in the Army.

And is not a Captain as good as a Doctor? I inquired.

No, said she, to be sure not; I wonder you should ask such a question.

Shall I have porridge for my breakfast? was my next question.

How should I know, retorted Mrs. Judy; but perhaps nothing so good.

Nothing so good! I replied. Why, what can be worse?

I wonder at your undutifulness Miss, returned Mrs. Judy; when your uncle wishes you to eat porridge, it shows a very bad heart in you to dislike it.

I said no more on the subject of the por-



ridge, but asked how many children my aunt Talbot had.

I don't know, she replied; but if they are all like you Miss, there will be a fine house.

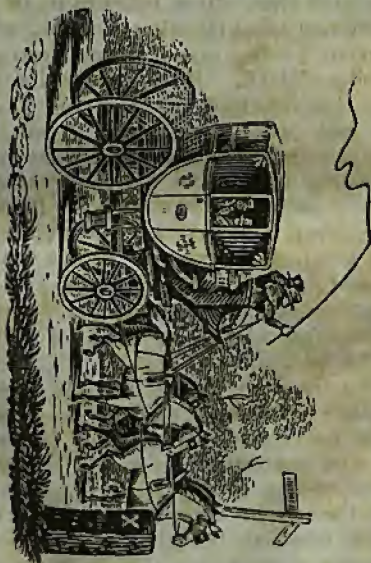
Does uncle Talbot read the newspapers? I asked next; but Mrs. Judy would hear no more, for it was bed time, and I was to go to my closet. The next morning I was called by break of day to attend Mrs. Judy to the carriage; and rejoiced, as I was going to London, to get free from my sad closet. When I came to take leave of my uncle, I burst into a flood of tears and hung about his neck for a few moments, with no other feelings but those of affection.

The old gentleman seemed quite softened; he kissed me tenderly, expressing his sorrow in parting from me, and told me that there was a home for me in his house as long as he lived.

My aunt Warner had been harsh and injudicious in her management of me; my uncle had tormented me with his systems respecting food and medicine, but they had both meant well; they had acted by me to the best of their knowledge; they had made me uncomfortable, indeed, but they had merited my respect, and I left their house with tears, and ever remembered them with gratitude. What my feelings are with regard to the persons under whose care I next fell, remains to be explained—in order to

which I shall beg my reader to accompany me and Mrs. Judy in my journey to London.

Stage coaches were not at that period either so convenient or so respectable as they now are; it was therefore thought proper that I



should travel in a post chaise, and I was by this arrangement, condemned to a *tête à tête* with Mrs. Judy. I had little enjoyment in

my journey, but what I derived from the sight of the new objects which presented themselves upon the road. We arrived in London late in the evening, and the next morning proceeded on our journey, not having more than fifteen miles to travel.

As we had breakfasted in London, we did not arrive at the place of our destination before one o'clock. Having entered a pretty village, we inquired for Captain Talbot's house, and were directed to a handsome dwelling, standing at some distance from the road, having a wall and gate in front, and a shrubbery behind. My uncle Talbot had left the army, and having come into possession of a handsome property by the death of an elder brother, he was living in affluence, although his ideas of comfort were, perhaps, not altogether similar to those of my poor aunt Warner.

As the carriage drove into the grounds, Mrs. Judy exclaimed against the apparent want of neatness of many things around the house, and seemed to be particularly struck with the broken sticks and torn papers with which the coach ring was scattered over. Another moment brought us to the door, which was opened by a slipshod houseman, a footman in a genteel undress, peeping in the mean time from some recess in the back ground of the hall.



Is Mrs. Talbot at home? was the first inquiry; to which we received a doubtful answer, and were made to stand awhile at the hall door, whilst the maid ascertained whether her mistress would be seen; in the mean time Mrs. Judy and I had opportunity to inspect all that was visible of the house.

We were standing at the entrance of a handsome hall, from the centre of whose roof hung a broken lamp; a marble table stood on one side of us with a crack right through the middle; immediately under the lamp was a rocking horse with a broken head; and a variety of dilapidated toys were scattered in all directions over the blue and white stone flooring of the apartment.

Look Mrs. Judy, I said, look at that rocking horse and those dolls.

Mrs. Judy did not require to be told to look; she had seen every thing, and had failed not to draw her conclusions, though she only uttered certain humphs and groans, with which she amused me till the maid servant again appeared and invited us to follow her.

Though we had stood ten minutes at least in the hall, the mistress of the house was no farther distant from us than the next parlour; and if she had availed herself of this opportunity to improve her own appearance, or that of the room in which she sat, it might, perhaps, afford some subject of speculation to

the curious to imagine what might have been the condition both of the lady and her apartment, before it had undergone the operations of such an arrangement as could be effected in a few minutes.

The room in which my aunt sat, was elegantly, and even richly furnished, but such a scene of confusion, I had scarcely ever beheld; what with broken play-things, torn papers, soiled aprons, hats, whips, cats, kittens, and puppy dogs, there was scarcely a chair on which a stranger might sit down; the fine Brussels carpet was stained in many places; and it appeared by an empty cup and saucer and some broken and gnawed crusts on the table, that some one had been breakfasting after the usual family meal had been removed.

My aunt sat on a sofa in a bow window, for it was summer, with a littered table before her, and her feet raised on a footstool. She was a large woman, her complexion was generally sallow, though she had a high colour in her cheeks; and she seemed almost too indolent to look any one in the face.

She scarcely moved when she saw me, though putting out one hand she called me to her, addressed me by my name, and said she was very glad to see me. I ran up to her, and thinking I must kiss her, put my mouth to her cheek, on which she turned a

little towards me and exerted herself so far as to say that she hoped I should be happy under her roof, as she was sure I was a very good girl and had been brought up with the greatest care.

That indeed she has been, exclaimed Mrs. Judy, worked up to the last pitch of indignation, by the cold and careless manner in which she had been overlooked.

If Miss Susannah does not behave well and prove herself to be the best of children, she will not have been worthy of the excellent education she has received; and then she burst forth in such a eulogium of her late mistress; of her neatness, order, carefulness, and regularity, as made my aunt Talbot look round her with amazement, and led her to inquire of the speaker if she had lived long with Mrs. Warner, and what place she held in the family.

That of housekeeper, madam, said Mrs. Judy, drawing up. I kept all the keys and saw that every thing was in its place in the house; and as she spoke she looked about her with an air and a manner which seemed to say, it's a pity that there is not some such decent person as myself in this house.

Indeed, said Mrs. Talbot, you were Mrs. Warner's housekeeper; and you have accompanied my niece from the country; would you choose a little breakfast?

Mrs. Judy looked as if she had not come all that way merely to accept a little breakfast; however, she restrained her wrath, and saying that she wished to return immediately, asked if she might not see the Captain.

Mrs. Talbot looked at the bell as if she intended Mrs. Judy to save her the trouble of ringing it; but Mrs. Judy did not take the hint. Mr. Talbot is somewhere in the grounds with the children, said my aunt; I wish I could see some one to call him. Mrs. Judy stood still.

Shall I trouble you, said my aunt, at length, to pull the bell?

Mrs. Judy walked across the room with dignity, but I spared her the pain of touching the bell rope by running before her, for which I received a gracious smile as my reward.

My dear Miss, said the old servant, addressing me, though we were still in my aunt's presence, I have done all that is required of me here; I see I shall only stay to see the Captain and deliver to him certain messages from my master respecting your health, and then I shall take my leave; and she looked scornfully at my aunt.

Oh, Mrs. Judy, I said, I shall be sorry when you go, (and my eyes filled with tears,) but never mind speaking about my health.

Is not my niece healthy? said my aunt, overhearing what we said.



Not particularly so, returned Mrs. Judy; her answer being delivered quite as laconically and coolly as the question had been put.

I hope, said my aunt, that there is no complaint about her which might infect the other children.

Mrs. Judy could scarcely reply for indignation, and at length answered by another question. Bless me, madam, what can you mean? and she was proceeding to add somewhat more, when my uncle burst into the room, followed by five children, the whole party shrieking, and shouting, and pushing before each other to see their new cousin.

As my uncle was the loudest and largest of the party, it was natural for me to look first at him; and I was by no means displeased at his appearance; for with a gentleman-like carriage, he had a handsome good-humoured countenance, and a hearty affectionate manner. I can give little account of the first five minutes passed in the presence of my newly met relations, for there was such a noise, such an uproar, so much hugging and kissing on all sides, and such a number of voices shrieking in my ears that I was glad to make my escape to the side of Mrs. Judy, who stood in the midst of this universal uproar like some mighty rock in the ocean, *fixed, immoveable, and of portentous aspect.*

The good woman, however, opened not her mouth, till my uncle Talbot, recollecting her, suddenly offered her his hand, exclaiming at the same time, What, Judy Griffin of savoury memory, how are you my old friend? have you forgotten the pranks I used to play amongst your cheese-cakes and mince-pies? Mrs. Talbot, I hope you have not failed to welcome Mrs. Judy Griffin.

My aunt looked up, but made no answer.

I have a letter from my master, for you sir, said the inexorable Mrs. Griffin; and with that she presented a letter, duly folded, directed, and sealed, from my uncle Warner, intimating that it contained certain documents respecting the management of my health.

Humph, said my uncle, the captain, as he received the letter; aye, yes, from the Doctor respecting Susannah's health; they call you Susannah, don't they my dear; and as he broke the seal, and running over the letter with his eye, repeated aloud some of the most important words, amongst which I distinguished, salts now and then; no fruit; porridge; spare diet; with several terms, whose direful import I too well understood; and then having finished its perusal he suddenly crumpled up the letter in a most unceremonious manner, and thrusting it into his waistcoat pocket, said, so far so well; give

my respects to my good brother Warner, and assure him that all shall be duly attended to, and I dare say we shall do very well: and now my good Mrs. Judy, what will you have? will you go into the housekeeper's room and regale yourself? you must stay with us for some days, we can't part with you yet: and his invitations were so warm and cordial that he would assuredly have succeeded, had not my aunt indolently remarked from her seat on the sofa, that the servant had expressed a wish to return with the chaise, and that it was only putting her to an inconvenience to press her to stay. Well, be it so, said my uncle, who it seems had accustomed himself to be very accommodating to all my aunt chose to propose; and Mrs. Judy, who appeared to be not half satisfied with her reception, made her exit with dignity, having first taken a more tender leave of me than I could possibly have expected from one of her cold and severe habits.

I remember that I stood at the bow window watching the exit of Mrs. Griffin, till the last wheel of the carriage had passed from my view, and might have stood some time longer meditating on many events of my early life, and on those scenes and persons which had now passed so entirely from my view, had I not been roused by a violent noise behind me; and turning round I found that my



uncle was engaged with Robert and William, his two sons, in a game at romps, the boys having been detected in an attempt to pick his pocket of my uncle Warner's letter, whilst my three female cousins, Julia, Fanny, and Kate, were in high altercation with each other, about some toy which each desired to appropriate exclusively to herself.

I had never witnessed a scene of this kind before, and being previously somewhat agitated in finding myself among total strangers, I burst into tears, and sobbed so loudly that the noise suddenly ceased and all the persons present turned round to look at me.

What, my little girl, said my uncle, kindly coming up to me and taking me in his arms; what, crying because you have found so many new relations? come, come, wipe away those tears and let us all be merry; and so saying he carried me out into the garden at the back of the house, where, being followed by all the children, we indulged in a violent fit of romps which was only concluded by a call to dinner, round which we all sat down without any of those previous ablutions and changes of garments which I had hitherto been taught to be indispensable before a formal repast of this kind.

The last dinner I had eaten was at an inn about forty miles on the other side of London, where I had been allowed to partake

sparingly of a little boiled mutton, and to taste the corner of a raspberry puff; consider then what were my feelings when I found myself seated at a well covered table, and allowed to take of every thing I chose. My uncle during the whole time not making the slightest reference to the Doctor's letter, and my aunt being so wholly occupied by her own concerns and those of my two youngest cousins, one of whom was placed on each side of her, that I might have endangered my life by my excesses before she would have been led to make a single observation on the subject; the first unpleasant effect I found from my want of moderation, was the increasing tightness of my clothes immediately round my waist; but regardless of this, I continued to indulge till I was actually so uncomfortable that I began to cry; and my uncle, supposing that I was fatigued, ordered me to be carried up into the nursery and put to bed.

I was glad of any excuse to be undressed, and had now no reason to dread the want of company in the sleeping apartment which was appropriated to me, for it was a long, wide, and airy apartment, containing four cribs and a servant's bed, and the nursery maid and sempstress were sitting at one end of the room, and were ready to undress me when the footman brought me to the door.

As I have given some description of the

confusion which prevailed in the parlour, I shall forbear to describe the various incumbrances of every chair, chest, bed, and table, of this more private apartment; however, as order and regularity are commonly matters of indifference to children, I should not have been much troubled by the contemplation of this scene of confusion, had I not felt an approaching headach, and experienced a dizziness in my head which added not a little in my fancy to the wild confusion of all around me; however, after I had been in bed a few minutes I was greatly relieved by a violent fit of sickness, after which I fell into a deep sleep and probably should have slept myself quite well had it not been for a circumstance which I am about to relate.

I was in a deep sleep, as I said before, and was dreaming of being in the post chaise with Mrs. Judy, when suddenly I thought that we had encountered a monstrous wagon laden with hay, which fell over us, and I awoke struggling, as I fancied, under the hay; but instead of being in a chaise and overwhelmed with hay, what was my amazement to find myself on a bed, and entirely enveloped with some of the clothes, which I had seen, on first entering the room, strewed over the floor of the apartment.

For some moments I was unable to get free; but when I at length succeeded in peep-

ing out for a little air from under the stifling mass, I was saluted with a burst of laughter from the whole assembled body of my cousins, which with the loud reproaches of the nursery maid and sempstress, formed no agreeable sound in the ears of one who was just wakened from a sound and healthful repose.

Much however as I had been kept under, I was not wanting in spirit, and I presently let my cousins know that I was not to be insulted with impunity, for I instantly seized all that lay within my reach, and threw it upon the enemy with all the force of which I was mistress.

My cousins were nothing behind me in returning the compliments which I paid, and such an uproar presently ensued that my aunt herself was moved, and actually appeared at the nursery door to inquire what was the matter.

The storm however was by no means hushed by her appearance, and she had requested the children to be quiet more than once before they would allow me to be at rest; in the mean time my aunt had walked into the room and seated herself on a bed, where she was presently surrounded by the children, who, without making any excuse for what had happened, or accounting in any way for the extraordinary confusion of every thing in the room, like experienced generals, lost no



time in carrying the contest towards the quarter from whence they expected the next assault, and set themselves one and all to obtain some favour from their mother; judging from former experience of the general good success of importunity where any thing was to be obtained.

Mamma, said Robert, shouting in at one ear, when are we to go to nurse's? you promised we should go some day, may we go this evening?

May'nt we go to the shop to night, said William? Mamma do let me have my wax doll out of the cupboard, said another.

Mamma, mamma, squealed a fourth, I want a bit of that cake in the pantry.

May not I show Susannah my doll's house, said a fifth? and the sixth, who was but two years old, finished the chorus by roaring for sugar-candy.

I could not see my aunt's face whilst all this uproar was going on, but I heard her command one and another to be quiet, threatening to call papa; and at length, being unable to bear the noise any longer, I saw her push some of the elder children from her, and bid the nursery maid turn Robert and William out of the room.

The maid however sat still, having her reasons, I suppose, for not obeying; and contenting herself with saying, I wish you would

be quiet young gentleman; there is no living for your noise.

Don't you put in your word, Mrs. Betty, said Robert sulkily.

Be quiet Robert, said the mother, who had by this time extended herself on the bed where she had been sitting; whilst the children, having sauntered up to the bow window at the end of the room, had gathered round the sempstress, and were all requiring something or other at her hand.

Sew me up this pocket, Mrs. Bint, said William; give me a bit of bees-wax, said Robert; I want a shred of that silk, said Julia; do lend me a needle, said Fanny; and on the good woman declaring her inability to satisfy all, they raised such an uproar that my aunt called again to the nursery maid, and in no agreeable tone of voice asked her why she did not obey her and turn the boys out of the room.

On this occasion the servant got up and attempted to seize hold of one or other of the boys, on which such a scuffle ensued as I had never before witnessed.

It seems that William was a much better tempered boy than Robert, and when Mrs. Betty attempted to lay hands on him, satisfied himself with eluding her grasp by such feats of activity as it was impossible to witness without laughing; sometimes he would

allow her almost to lay hold of him, and then would make his escape by diving under one bed, jumping over another, creeping under the table, or climbing upon a chest of drawers, and when weary of these exploits he at length made his exit with a tumble head over heels, and a flying leap down stairs.

Master William having thus taken his departure, Mrs. Betty being re-urged by her mistress, made her next attack upon Robert, and was pushing him by the shoulders out of the room when he suddenly turned upon her and struck her.

The young woman very properly did not return the blow, but called on her mistress to reprove her son.

This my aunt did not choose to hear, thus holding out all the encouragement she decently could to the young gentleman's bad conduct, and as might be expected he repeated his blow; on which the servant being justly offended, used her utmost strength, and forcing him out of the room closed the door and bolted it; the boy being thus shut out set up such screams and cries on the outside of the door, accusing Betty of having hurt him, that the weak mother took alarm and ordered her to open the door again, accusing her of violence.

He is not hurt madam, said the servant. I desire you to open the door, said my aunt,



in her accustomed indolent manner; I choose to see if my child is hurt; and the door was opened and Robert brought to his mother that it might be ascertained where he was injured.

In order to make his triumph more complete, Master Robert chose to appear to be in great pain, and in consequence it was thought necessary that he should be laid on a bed whilst his back was rubbed by his mamma, and in this state he lay till my uncle's voice was heard under the window, calling the boys to bring their fishing rods, and accompany him to a neighbouring pond; on which occasion Robert jumped up and left the room, whilst his mother again extended herself on the bed. Whilst this scene was passing between Master Robert, his mother, and Mrs. Betty, it must not be supposed that my younger cousins were quiet, or that they allowed any one in the room to be at peace; little Kate insisted on coming in and out of my bed at least twenty times, and on one of these occasions fell down and bruised her head; Julia cut up a piece of silk which Mrs. Bint had prepared for a sleeve, and which could not be matched in the village; and Fanny broke a china bason, full of food for the infant, and poured its contents over a basket of clean linen; and thus the afternoon wore away till my aunt and the remainder

of her unruly flock, were called to tea; whilst I, being considered as an invalid, was left in the nursery to enjoy the company of the maids, and to glory in my emancipation from porridge and dry bread.

Notwithstanding the scene of confusion which I had witnessed in the nursery, I certainly had some pleasant anticipations respecting the life of freedom which I hoped to enjoy under Mr. Talbot's roof; and though my play-fellows were undoubtedly not the most agreeable, yet I could not divest myself of the idea that it would be pleasant to have persons of my own age to associate with: then the ease and abundance of the house was certainly a more inviting, at first sight, than the extreme formality of my former abode; and I could have no clear ideas of the evils which are ever attendant on a state of anarchy, whether in a small or large society; neither had I any religious principles to restrain my desires of self-indulgence, for my superstitious fears were chased away, at least for the time, by the bustle in which I had been lately involved, and I had no better feeling to take their place.

I had been pleased with my uncle Talbot's friendly attentions, and I considered my aunt already as a mere nothing who would let me do as I chose, and would be as blind to my faults as to those of her own family; and thus,

as I lay speculating on these matters, I fell asleep and did not wake till the children came roaring and shouting up stairs to be put to bed.

The next morning I was allowed to rest, or rather lounge, on my bed till breakfast time, when the non-appearance of the dreaded porridge seemed to fill up the sum of my happiness.

This my second day at my uncle Talbot's was to be a holiday, as a compliment to me, which I rejoiced to hear, though I certainly was more weary at the end of the day than I had ever been of any twelve hours I had ever spent in my life; for my uncle's children never played, but spent all their leisure hours in lounging, squabbling, and eating: the third day was however to bring a recurrence of lessons, on which occasion a writing-master, and what is called a day-governess, made their appearance, and these teachers remained with us every day till one o'clock, unless they were displaced by the dancing-master, who attended twice in the week. The governess was, as I afterwards found, a well-educated young person who lived in the village, and might, perhaps, have profited us considerably, for she seemed to be in earnest in what she undertook, had not my aunt been always in the room, and always ready to supply excuses for indolence and want of at-

tention. You must excuse Fanny this morning, Miss Clayton, she would say, if she is not so quick as usual, for she has complained of a headach, and poor Robert was out all yesterday with his papa, and it is not surprising if he is tired and dull, &c. &c. So what with mamma's excuses, and my cousins' dislike of learning, the progress they made was very slow, in so much so, that in the comparison I passed with Miss Clayton when first put under her care, for rather a clever, well-instructed child.

I was tolerably contented at my uncle Talbot's for some weeks, though I did not find the happiness I at first expected, many little troubles arising which I had not foreseen. Being left entirely to myself in the article of food, I used no restraint whatever, and in consequence so frequently overloaded my stomach that I became subject to sickness and headaches, and after a while so entirely lost my taste for any common food, that in fact I seemed presently to have lost all relish for my meals, and often sat down to my breakfast and dinner anxious to eat, and greedy of dainties indeed, but incapable of enjoying any thing.

I also found that I had miscalculated the easiness of my aunt's temper.

She was, without doubt, an indolent woman, and used neither watchfulness or obser-



vation, notwithstanding which, when the ill conduct of her children really put her to inconvenience, (I will say nothing of shame, for she was not very liable to feelings of this kind,) she became very irritable, and if she could not find any other persons to blame than these her children, she would generally contrive to throw the whole blame on one individual amongst them; and the persons commonly selected on these occasions were her second son and eldest daughter; the one because he was evidently not a favourite, and the other because she had conceived the idea that this girl ought to take from her all the burthen of her family, and possess all the wisdom and self-denial which her mother had never practised. In case, however, of a possibility of throwing off blame of any misdemeanour upon another, she never attempted to settle it on any of her own family: and on these occasions she was often guilty of injustice the most glaring and offensive; and though she never had recourse to any penalty, or the infliction of any actual punishment, yet she contrived to make every one around her miserable, and to fill every mind with the idea of being ill-used and disliked.

When a child or servant is found fault with in a just and conscientious manner, there is always a certain something within which pleads for the reprover; but the mind

revolts against unjust accusations, and the will rises against those who are capable of making them; accordingly I soon ceased to respect my aunt, and became wholly careless whether I pleased her or not: I avoided her company; I disliked my cousins, because they were objects of her selfish regard, and I was occupied by no other concern than that of pampering and pleasing myself. Thus for three whole years I lived the slave of passion and prejudice, defending myself, whenever I was detected in doing wrong, by palliations, untruths, and gradually changing from a well-behaved, neat little girl, into a bold, slovenly, coarse, and ill-bred romp.

The only persons for whom I had the slightest regard in the family were my cousin William, my uncle, and the nursery maid: as to my aunt, I had every feeling towards her that I should not have had; Robert I feared from his violence, and I hated Julia because she gave herself the airs of an elder sister; Fanny was my aversion, because she was the favourite of her mamma, and her word would be believed against any of us; and I hated the two least children, because they had dirty faces. Such was the state of my mind whilst I remained in this family, and such the comforts of an ill-ordered household: I had experienced the effects of extreme strictness; and I do not hesitate to say, that

the miseries of mis-rule are as much greater than those of even severity, as the outrages of a mob are more to be dreaded than the over-weening power of a single tyrant.

The time, however, of my residence with my aunt Talbot was wearing to a close; and I shall hasten to give an account of some of the last days which I spent in this unhappy situation.

Over the chimney-piece in the common sitting-room in this house, was a miniature picture, in ivory, of my aunt; it had been taken when she was in her bloom, and being so nearly allied to herself, was an object of no small value and interest to her.

It happened one morning as we were all, with the exception of William, playing in this room, where the picture was, that I having happened to give some offence to Master Robert, he took up a wooden nine-pin and hurled it at my head; it was natural for me to endeavour to shrink from this furious assault: I accordingly stooped when I saw the nine-pin coming, and raised my hand to save my head, by which I perhaps might have turned the course of the missile: but be this as it may, the nine-pin having missed my head, struck with such force against the miniature picture, which was just behind me, that the glass and ivory were smashed into a thousand pieces, and in one moment the only

remaining memorial of my aunt's good looks perished for ever.

For an instant we all stood appalled at the accident, and a general silence prevailed through the room; it was not, however, of long duration, but was presently followed by a universal burst of exclamations, amongst which I could only hear these words of my cousin Julia, who looking reproachfully at me, said, well Miss Susannah you have done it now, and pray what do you think my mamma will say to your precious handy works? What have I done? I repeated, with unmingled astonishment. I did not do it; it was Robert.

Was it? she said, laughing; indeed I did not understand that; did not you turn the nine-pin against the picture? It would never have touched the picture if you had not forced it towards it with your hand. And if I did so it was only to save my head Miss Julia, I answered; and it is no more than any one else would have done in the same situation; but I am sure I did not mean to hurt the picture.

But you did Susannah, said Robert, you did, and I shall tell mamma all about it.

Tell her what you will, false and deceitful boy, I replied in a flame of indignation, tell her what you will, I don't care for any of you. What more I added I know not, for whilst I



spoke my aunt appeared, and fixed her eyes on the unfortunate miniature.

Who did this mischief? she inquired, evidently in great agitation.

Susannah did it, said Fanny, and she says she does not care.

My aunt's angry eyes were fixed on me; I did not do it, Miss Fanny, I said, and you speak a falsehood if you say I did.

But you did, said Robert; you did, said Julia; you did, said Fanny, you know you did.

My aunt looked more and more angry, and when I would have spoken bade me go up into the nursery, at the same time giving me such a push as sent me reeling to the door.

In the hall I met William, who, seeing me crying and sobbing with passion, inquired the cause; and being made acquainted with the state of the case, he undertook my cause, which I heard him plead with much spirit and sincerity as I stood listening without the door, though frequently interrupted by Robert and Julia.

I will speak Robert, (I heard him say,) I will not allow you to say what is not true of Susannah.

I did not distinctly hear Robert's answer; but it seems that words were beginning to run very high between the two brothers, when my aunt interfered and bid them both

be silent. My picture is destroyed amongst you she said, and it little matters who has done it; let me hear no more about it.

Then I may bring Susannah back, said William.

No, said my aunt, let her go to the nursery, or we shall have more mischief. Susannah did not do the mischief mamma, it was Robert, said William; did I not tell you that I will hear no more about it, said my aunt, what business is it of yours, William? It is every body's business to prevent injustice, said William.

Did I not tell you that I would not be teased any more, returned the mother? My picture is destroyed and that is enough for me.

Yes, said William, but not by Susannah. Will you never have done? said the mother, and at that moment hearing a step behind me in the hall, and fearing that it might be my uncle, whom I well knew would be prevailed upon to judge of this affair as his wife chose, I ran up into the nursery, where I opened all my grievances to Mrs. Betty, and our old friend the sempstress. I shall not repeat all that was said on this occasion; indeed, I cannot recollect it, nor is it of much consequence; but it chiefly consisted in invectives against my aunt and cousins, with the exception of William; and Mrs. Betty remarked,

that it was a great mistake for a servant to suppose that an indolent and careless lady made the best mistress; for, said she, though I have been as much as four years in this house, yet I will plainly say, that I would not have stayed two had it not been for master, who knew that I was trusty with the children, and made it worth my while to put up with the noise, and uproar, and confusion, and my mistress's odd ways; but, added she, I don't think for all that that I shall be able to bear it much longer: for my mistress never knows when she is well served, and it's just a chance whether she is pleased or displeased. Servants are always most comfortable with those mistresses who look after their own households, and know when things are right and when they are wrong: and if servants are, I am sure children are, added I; for though my aunt Warner was so particular, I was ten times happier with her than I am here, for I knew how to please her, and how to keep out of mischief, and there was nobody to believe lies against me, and that is not the case here.

In this manner I continued to converse with Mrs. Betty, till the sound of carriage wheels struck our ears, and running up to the windows we looked out, and saw a neat chaise and pair drive up to the door, within which was a lady and child.

Ah, said Mrs. Bent, who can that be? the

lady looks not unlike Mrs. Darnley: surely it cannot be your aunt Darnley, all the way from Devonshire.

Mrs. Darnley was my father's younger sister, she had married a clergyman some years since, and as it happened, I had never seen her, though her husband was my third guardian. This lady had two daughters and one son.

My aunt Darnley! I said, trying to get a glance of her as she stepped out of the carriage: oh! how I should like to be acquainted with her: is she like my aunt Talbot?

Not at all, said the sempstress, with a certain expressive look at Mrs. Betty; not the least: she was here about five years since, and I made her a gown, and I never saw any one more easy to fit. She is as nice a lady as ever I saw, and speaks so kindly to her inferiors. Ah, said Mrs. Betty, that does not agree with what I have heard my mistress say of her.

Why, what does she say of her? said Mrs. Bent. That she is very particular in her family.

She is none the worse for that, said Mrs. Bent.

No, to be sure, returned the other; that is what we were saying just now, that those persons who know how work is to be done, and understand the way in which things



should be managed, and can distinguish between right and wrong, and will be obeyed when they give an order, are the best to deal with in the long run; and that's what I think every servant will allow.

The lady who had arrived in the carriage was, in fact, no other than my aunt Darnley, as we soon found from the footman, to whom Betty spoke from the top of the stairs; and I in consequence expected to be called down every minute: but the time wore away, and I was left where I was till my female cousins came up to be dressed before dinner.

Betty, mamma says, you are to make us very tidy and smart, for aunt Darnley takes a great deal of notice. How am I to make you tidy all at once? returned Mrs. Betty; you know I am always telling you of your untidiness, and those little misses who are not neat when there is no company, will never be very nice when there is.

That's no business of yours Betty, said Julia; but you are to put on some of our best things now: and so saying, she went to the drawers and laid out some of the smartest things she and her sisters possessed.

Is Miss Susannah to be dressed? said the servant.

I don't know, said Julia; mamma is angry with her; but she did not say she was not to be dressed.

I was accordingly prepared for my appearance, and went down with my cousins into the dining parlour, where I found my aunt Darnley ready to receive me with affection; having, as I afterwards found, frequently inquired for me before.

My aunt had a little girl with her, somewhat older than myself, called Emmeline: she was standing by her mother when first I saw her, and I was extremely taken with her sweet and modest appearance, and the rare simplicity and neatness of her dress.

I was not less pleased with my aunt Darnley, though the vivacity of her countenance and a certain quickness with which she seemed to observe all around her, made me feel a considerable degree of fear mingled with the love which she inspired.

After having received her warm and cordial embraces, I had placed myself in such a direction that I could watch her countenance, and at the same time make a comparison between her and my aunt Talbot, with whom I was not at that time in the best possible humour; and as I carried on my comparison, I thought that I never had seen two sisters more unlike.

We were soon summoned to the dinner table; and after dinner, it being summer time, a variety of fruit was set before us.

My uncle Talbot, and my aunt Darnley,

had kept up a lively and agreeable conversation during dinner, and the children having all been deeply engaged in the important business of satisfying their appetites, had been perfectly silent; but this quiet was not to continue much longer. Whilst the servants were setting on the dessert they began to talk, and the youngest child, now five years of age, chose to leave her place and get on her mother's lap, and as she climbed up on her knees she gave her gown a terrible rent.

My aunt Talbot exclaimed at this invasion on her comforts and possessions; and pushing the child away, remarked, that there were nothing but misfortunes that day, pointing to the broken miniature which still hung over the mantle-piece.

Ah, said my uncle, that was an unfortunate accident indeed; and his eye glanced at me.

My aunt Darnley remarked, that she was sorry to see the picture so destroyed, as it had been at the time a very good likeness.

You thought so, did not you Anna, said Mrs. Talbot; but it cannot be helped now: and she looked again at me. Well, but how did the accident happen, said my aunt Darnley: you say by a nine-pin, but how came a nine-pin in contact with the picture.

It was Susannah's doing, said Julia; Susannah did it, said Robert.

I did not, cousin Robert;—I did not, Julia I exclaimed, my whole face flushing with passion; I did not do it, and you know that you are speaking untruths. Julia and Robert looked at their mamma, my uncle fixed his eyes on me, and my aunt Darnley turned from one to another round the table as if she was reading every countenance.

I did not do it, it was not my fault, I continued to repeat, though my aunt Talbot told me continually to be silent; till at length, quite overcome with passion, I burst into tears and said, only ask William how the picture was broken, he will tell, he knows how it was, and he can speak the truth.

And so can I too, Miss Susannah, replied Robert. Here my uncle called us to order with a violent blow on the table; and my aunt Darnley remarked that it might perhaps be a satisfaction to all present, if each of the parties were allowed to tell their own story.

What would be the use of that, said my aunt Talbot, I at least have had enough of it; I have heard nothing else this morning. Then how was it, said my uncle; if you have heard it so often, do give us the satisfaction of hearing it once more: and as he spoke there was something in his manner which made my aunt understand that he would for once have his own way, for she immediately ceased to make any resistance; but seeing



some person pass before the window, though it was only the gardener; she got up, walked to the window, called to him, and pretended to have recollected something which had been neglected.

My uncle in the mean time, to my great satisfaction, made Robert and Julia tell their story, after which, seeing me unable to speak for myself, he ordered William to speak for me; when each party had stated the case, they were cross-examined by my uncle, assisted by my aunt Darnley, who by one or two important questions brought the whole to light, and established my innocence, and the dishonourable conduct of my cousins.

For shame, for shame, said Mrs. Darnley, looking at Julia and Robert with honest displeasure; but, perhaps recollecting that she was not at home, and not dealing with her own children, she added no more; nor indeed was any more necessary then, for my uncle very properly bid his son and daughter leave the room, and keep out of his sight for some days to come; and this was no sooner effected than my aunt Talbot returned to the table, and was duly informed that my innocence was established.

Established indeed it was; but I had no further prospect of justice than I had before, for I saw a concentrated rage in the countenance of my aunt, whose lip trembled, and

whose eye snot fire, but she restrained herself and remarked, that Robert and Julia were very naughty children; and then instantly turning from the subject, and bringing forward one which she knew would interest her husband, the whole matter appeared to have been forgotten to all except me; but I still trembled with the apprehension of what I might expect.

My aunt Darnley having sat a little longer, complained of fatigue, and asked permission to retire for a short time to rest; and Mrs. Talbot at the same time rising to go into the nursery with her children, I took the opportunity to steal into a retired part of the garden where I could yield in quietness to my heaviness of heart.

There, sitting down under the shade of a cluster of filbert-trees, I wept without restraint; and how often did I wish myself back under the comparatively peaceful roof of my aunt Warner's house.



### CHAPTER III.

HERE I remained till called to the tea-table, where I appeared with eyes swollen and every expression of sorrow. My aunt Darnley and my cousins took no notice of me at

tea, and Julia and Robert were absent; my uncle also, and William, were out. I had, however, to endure many cold and angry looks from Mrs. Talbot; and when my uncle returned after tea, I was surprised to see the two offenders brought down, and their pardon pleaded for from their father, in the presence of the whole family.

How should I forgive them, Mrs. Talbot, said my uncle, when they persisted so long in a mischievous falsehood?

They were frightened—they meant no harm, said my aunt; do kiss them and make it up. The children and the mother continued to plead; the former seemed to be sorry, and my uncle forgave them; and thus they were taught to think light of that conduct which they ought to have been made to abhor. I expected that my aunt Darnley would have interfered; but she said nothing, at least before us, and, by her guarded manner, I supposed that her mind had been poisoned towards me, and that I had nothing to hope from that quarter.

Mrs. Darnley remained with us nearly a week, and during that time I was very unhappy. My aunt Talbot and cousins, always excepting William, treating me with the utmost coldness; though I had nothing whatever to complain of with respect to my food, or of any other indulgence of that kind, yet

I was miserable, and much of my misery, I have since thought, proceeded from the agitated state of my passions, which were all up in arms against Mrs. Talbot, whose cold and selfish carelessness rendered her almost an object of aversion to me.

In the mean time my aunt Darnley was preparing for her departure; and as she had taken little notice of me, I heard of her having determined to go off the next morning without regret.

However, on the eve of her departure, I was surprised to see Mrs. Betty engaged in putting my clothes into a trunk; and when I questioned her on the occasion, I heard, with a satisfaction I cannot describe, that I was to go and live with my aunt Darnley.

From that time all was confusion and tumult in my mind, and when, at length, I was put into the chaise with my aunt and little cousin, my joy was sullied only by a single tear, and that tear was shed for William.

As soon as the door of the chaise was shut, and the postillion had put the horses in motion, my cousin Emmeline took hold of my hand, and putting it into her mother's, said, I am so glad, mamma, that Susannah is coming to live with us; she will be so happy, and we shall love her so much.

My aunt, as her little daughter spoke,



drew me closer to her, and said, I hope she will be happy, my Emmeline; I have no wish, my dear Susannah, but to make you happy; and she kissed me affectionately.

Oh! aunt Darnley, I said, I am so glad that I am coming with you! and I burst into tears, confessing that I had lately been very miserable.

Well, my dear, said my aunt, that is now passed, we will talk no more about it; I saw that you were not comfortable, and therefore I persuaded your uncle Talbot to part with you; and I trust and hope, my dear child, that you will have no reason to lament the change.

Indeed I never shall, I answered; for I was miserable with my aunt Talbot; and I was going to utter several complaints, when Mrs. Darnley interrupted me, saying, my beloved child we will drop all this; when you leave any place you ought to remember nothing but the kindness you have received in that place; and if you are inclined to find fault with the conduct of any person towards yourself, then ask of your own heart whether your own behaviour deserved any better treatment.

But I did not break the picture, indeed, aunt Darnley.

I do not say that you did, my dear, said, she; but did you not break out into a passion

when you were wrongfully accused, and did you not indulge in invectives against your aunt and cousins?

But they did not hear me, aunt Darnley, I answered.

Perhaps not, she replied; but there was one who did.

Betty heard me, I answered, and Mrs. Bent; did they tell you about it aunt?

No, my dear, returned Mrs. Darnley.

Then how did you know that they heard me?

I did not know that they heard you, my love, said my aunt; and I was not thinking of Betty when I said that there was one who heard you speak ill of your aunt. I was thinking of God, who knows all we do, and takes account of every idle word we speak.

I had heard nothing of this kind for some years past, and could make no reply.

On which my aunt, judging, perhaps, what passed in my mind, said, there is one thing, my dear child, which I wish to explain to you before we are longer together, in order that you may understand me, and not be at a loss how to please me. I am now to stand in the place of a parent to you, and all the duties you owed to your own dear parents, now no more, you owe to me. I am, therefore, to be considered by you, as long as you live with me, as a mother; and I wish you to

tell me from whom a mother receives her authority over her child.

I hesitated a little, and then said, from God.

And which, said she, is the greatest? the God who gives the parent his authority, or the parent who receives the authority from God?

I answered, certainly the God who gives the authority.

Then, said she, if a parent is so wicked as to neglect or misguide these children, by what superior law should such unhappy children be regulated.

I replied by the law of God.

Such being the case, she replied, every child, in all situations, whether under the guidance of good or bad parents, of kind or cruel guardians, ought to have one fixed rule of conduct, and that is the will of God. The word of God, my child, is a sure and certain guide in every situation in life; and I now tell you, that by studying his word and endeavouring to act up to it, you will find the means of pleasing me; so that you need never to be at a loss in what manner to suit yourself to my temper or my wishes.

By the word of God, aunt, I replied; do you mean the Bible?

Certainly, she answered.

But I know very little of the Bible, I answered.

I am sorry for that, my dear, she replied; but we will get you a Bible in London, and you shall immediately consult it, in order to learn how children should behave to their parents.

Oh, aunt Darnley, I said, but I fear it will be very long before I understand all these things.

If you mean, said she, that it will be very long before you understand the whole of the Bible, I grant it will be so; but there are a few plain things in religion, which, with the divine blessing, a child much younger than you are, might soon be made to understand.

The first of these is this, that the Almighty God, not choosing to show himself personally to mankind, has revealed his will to his creatures in his written word, in the same manner as I might write to you at a distance, and tell you what to do: and if a little child understands this, and has a Bible, and can read, is there any reason, I ask you, why he may not know his Lord's will—as far, at least, as it is necessary for him to know it.

A little child may also soon be made to know that his kind father or mother is given to him as a friend to whom he may run in all his troubles, and to whom he may confess all his faults, and from whom he may receive help and direction in studying the word of God.



And now, my dear child, added my kind aunt, as there are many pretty things to be seen upon the road, I will not keep your attention longer upon these subjects: but only recollect these two things; the first is, that you will find all that is needful to be known of God, and of yourself, and of the rules of life and conduct, in the Bible; and that you have now found a mother, from whom you must not hide any thing wrong which you have done.

Remember, my child, that you must tell me every thing you do amiss; and I will weep together with you for your faults, and we will pray together, and I will show you where you are to seek strength to do better in future; and then, my Susannah, you will become a holy and a happy little girl, and you will enjoy such sweet peace as you never knew before.

As my aunt spoke, I looked at her face, and thought I had never before seen so sweet a countenance. I did not then know what it was that made her look so lovely, for I had never before had occasion to notice a set of features beaming with holy charity, and pure—I might say, perfect love. I can give you no idea of the impression which her manner and discourse made upon me, or how my heart was drawn out with love towards her and her lovely little daughter, whose tender

and dove like eyes, were fixed upon me all the while her mother was speaking, in a manner which might be more easily conceived than described.

We passed through London this day about noon; and, having dined and bought a Bible, we continued our journey in the direction toward Devonshire. We arrived about seven o'clock at a small town, where we had some tea and went to bed. I slept in the same room with my aunt and cousin, and before we got into bed, my aunt made me read the first chapter of Genesis in my new Bible, and join her and my cousin in prayer. I was surprised to find that I understood every word of her prayer, and felt myself considerably affected by the tender and affectionate manner in which she made mention of me in her supplications. In the morning we arose early, and continued our journey.

We were now entering into a much more wild and natural country than that which surrounds London; and I shall never forget the impression which was made on my mind by a conversation which passed between my aunt and Emmeline, on the morning of our leaving the inn where we had slept. We were travelling over a wide and level down, fragrant with heath and other aromatic herbs. On the horizon was a mist, above which the red rays of the rising sun shot upwards to-

ward the meridian. Many sheep were feeding on the down, attended by little shepherd boys, sitting apart from each other, and presenting the images of innocence and peace.

A few thatched cottages, in blooming gardens, were scattered here and there; and now and then an ancient spire or tower presented itself to our view.

Oh, mamma, said Emmeline, how happy those little shepherds appear to be, and how fresh and sweet are the breezes which blow over this place. If I did not love our own home so well, I think I could be very glad to live in one of those cottages, and enjoy the quiet of this pleasant place.

When we travel through countries unknown to us, my dear Emmeline, said my aunt, and see picturesque cottages and pleasant gardens and groves, and waterfalls, and hills and meadows, we are apt to think that the inhabitants of such places must be happy; not considering that happiness has little to do with the places in which we live, but that it entirely depends on our feelings towards our God.

You may judge of this, my beloved child, by your own experience. When your heart is filled with love to your God, and drawn out in affection for him and his people, are you not always happy? and when your heart

is not in that blessed state, are you not always miserable?

Oh, yes, mamma, returned Emmeline, I have often felt what you describe.

My aunt, then addressing me, took occasion to give me the first information I had ever received respecting the awful doctrine of man's depravity; and made me understand the reason why I had been so particularly unhappy in my aunt Talbot's house.

There is in our nature, my dear child, said she, a certain inclination to do evil, which requires a constant controul; and when this controul is not exercised, human beings invariably make themselves miserable, and have no power to help it.

There are many things which force grown people to restrain themselves, and behave with a certain decency and propriety, though they may not have much religion. Some people are obliged to work for their bread, and then they must submit to the humours of their masters; and gentlemen and ladies know, that if they do not pay their debts and behave properly to each other, that they will be cast out of society, and that nobody will notice them. But little children, when living in their parents' houses, have no fears of this kind; and if their parents do not keep them in order, they become torments to themselves and to every one about them; and thus



it was in your poor aunt Talbot's family, She is blameably careless of her children; and though her young people have every indulgence which it is possible for her to supply, they are truly miserable, and all who have any thing to do with them are miserable also.

The children themselves are slaves of their own bad passions, and they can neither rest themselves, nor let any one rest who has any thing to do with them. Your aunt has no comfort in her children—neither can she expect any—for she cannot be made to believe that their natures are depraved, or that any restraint is needful for them.

My aunt then added a great deal more on the depravity of man's nature, and made me understand that he had not been made originally sinful, but had become so through the transgression of our first parents; and led me to look into myself to discover the symptoms whereby I might discern this depravity in my own heart, showing me that my greediness of food, my inclinations to make my own story good on all occasions at the expense of truth, my unthankfulness, my entire forgetfulness of my God, my slovenliness and want of courtesy of manner, were all symptoms of that depravity of heart, of which she spoke as belonging to all and every one of the children of Adam.

But, aunt, I said, you have seen very little of me at my aunt Tribot's, and how do you know that I have all those faults.

Here Emmeline interposed and said, you do not know, Susannah, how quick mamma is in knowing the ways of children. You must never attempt to hide any thing from mamma; she will find you out in a minute.

I am glad of it Emmeline, I replied.—Glad! said my aunt, somewhat surprised at the glee with which I spoke. Yes, aunt, I said, I feel that I shall like to live with a person who will know when I am really good, and when I am really naughty. Really good! replied my aunt; when are we poor creatures really good? —We are better sometimes than others at least, aunt, I said, and I do not like people to find fault with me when I am not particularly naughty.—Perhaps you do not like to be found fault with at any time, said my aunt. I do not know, I answered; I am not quite certain about that; to be sure I don't like to be scolded and punished at any time: but I think I should like to be set right in a kind way when I am wrong, for I am *tired*, tired of being such a wild, idle girl as I have been, and I would give all the world to be like my cousin Emmeline. As I spoke these words I burst into tears, and my aunt turning towards me, kissed me with tenderness, saying, my dear Susannah, I thank God who has put

this feeling into your heart; and be assured my child, that if you will but be sincere with me, if you will but make me your friend and never deceive me, you shall ever find an affectionate and tender mother in me, sisters in your cousins, and a father in your uncle.

Thus my dear aunt initiated me by degrees, and in the most gentle, easy, and winning manner; into the mysteries of our blessed religion; and now that I am speaking on this subject I must not fail to say, that as soon as she had duly impressed my mind with the doctrine of man's depravity and utter helplessness, she proceeded to unfold to me the mighty work of man's salvation, in all its parts. Nor can I ever forget the glow of animation with which she first explained to me the love of the Father, the triumph of the Son over sin and death upon the cross, and the various offices of the Holy Spirit.

The general outline of these solemn mysteries were given me by my aunt, on the third and last day of our journey; and all that I afterwards heard on the subject of religion, served to fill up this great outline, and to open more and more intimately each lesser part of the mighty whole; and thus, whilst my mind became daily more and more enriched with heavenly knowledge, I was made to behold the beautiful effects of true piety in

the conduct of every individual of the family; and to feel, that if I was not myself wholly under the influence of religion, I was much indebted for happiness to the firmness, gentleness, forbearance, and universal rectitude of those that were.

But, to proceed with my narrative; on the evening of the third day, having entered a little valley enclosed by two woody hills, we arrived in view of a neat parsonage house, standing in a garden, and shaded to the north by a grove of lofty oaks, and having in its front a wide field which shelved down to a little brook. At the moment when our carriage had arrived at the spot from whence the house could be distinctly seen, with all its useful and picturesque appendages, a wagon load of hay was passing away from the field through the gate, and we saw many persons engaged with their forks and rakes collecting the residue of the hay; amongst these, my aunt immediately distinguished her daughter Lucy, and her little son Charles; and soon after my uncle himself was distinguished, sitting with a book in the shade of a large tree.

Oh! happy, happy, home, exclaimed Emeline, in an ecstasy of delight. Oh! mamma, mamma, we are come home again; Susannah, there is Lucy and little Charles, dear little Charles and papa, and old John, and Kitty, and Sally, and the widow Jerret, and Jenny,



all in the hay field. Oh, how glad they will be when they see the carriage, and how pleased they will be to see Susannah; and as she spoke she fluttered like a little bird, who being held in the hand is trying to escape.

We had now descended deeper into the valley, and were passing through a rural lane enclosed on each side by thatched cottages, and were actually about to enter the blooming garden of the parsonage, before the busy people in the hay field were aware of our approach; but scarcely was the alarm of our arrival given, than such a ring of joy thrilled through our ears as I had scarcely ever heard before, and more happy faces gathered round us than I had ever seen in all the course of my life before that moment. I do not know how I got out of the chaise, but I presently found myself in a neat room, where the tea things were prepared before an open window; and I was introduced to my uncle, whose mild and gentleman-like manner, and serene and intelligent countenance, made me no sooner look at him than desire to obtain his esteem.

We, the travellers, were very hungry, having had no dinner, and we immediately sat down to tea, but with no confusion; every person seemed to know his place, and mine was appointed to me between my aunt and eldest cousin.

There was nothing on the table but tea, excellent melon, home-made bread, and fresh butter; and my aunt without bustle or ostentation gave each of the children their proper portion. After tea a little box including a few presents from London was introduced, and whilst it was unpacked, I observed no confusion amongst the children, but each waited patiently till every thing was unfolded; and I saw with some surprise, that not only the servants of the family had been remembered, but even some of the poorest and oldest inhabitants of the village; and Emmeline and Lucy were charged to go into the hay field, and deliver the presents to such of the persons as might there be found.

When this important business was finished, and little Charles had duly inspected his coloured pictures, I was taken by my cousins to see the house, and to be shown the room where I was to sleep with them. I was also introduced to an old female servant, who had once been nurse in the family, and was then a kind of housekeeper; made acquainted with the cat, the dog, and the magpie; introduced into the garden, and shown what plot of ground was to be appropriated to me. In this manner did we spend the remainder, of the evening. and before I went to bed I was present, for the first time in my life, at family worship, and heard the children's voices join-

ed with those of their parents in a hymn of praise, after which the younger part of the family went to bed; my aunt having previously informed me that she wished me to attend to all the habits of neatness and propriety to which she had accustomed her own little girls; directing them to make me acquainted with their rules.



#### CHAPTER IV.

I promised my aunt to be very attentive; but the moment I got into our bed-room I forgot what she had been saying, and beginning to undress myself I threw my clothes on the ground. Here are some drawers for you Susannah; those are yours, and these are ours said Emmeline, and we fold up our things when we take them off and put them into the

drawers. Indeed! I said; don't you find it troublesome to take so much pains? Mamma has ordered us to do it, was her answer.

I am sure I shall never learn to be so careful, I replied.

I should advise you, said Lucy, not to say so; for I will plainly tell you, that mamma is a person who will be obeyed when she gives an order. I made no answer, but ceasing to undress, I sat down, and looked out of the window, for it was not yet dark: in the mean time my cousins knelt down by their beds and prayed, and when they got up from their knees they began to fold up their clothes. I sat looking at them for a minute, and then began to make some observations on my aunt Talbot's slovenly habits: on which Lucy expressing some astonishment, began to question me about the family.

I was about to answer, when Emmeline remarked to her sister, that her mother had advised me not to talk of Mrs. Talbot and her children. Susannah does not like them, she added in a lower tone, and perhaps, if she talks about them she may be tempted to say something unkind. O! I did not understand that, replied Lucy; we won't talk any more about them then, and as you are tired Emmeline we will go to bed and to sleep.

The little girls then hastened into bed, and asking me to do the same, I presently found



by their gentle breathing, that they were asleep.

I was not, however, inclined to follow their example; I had been accustomed to irregular hours; besides which, it was still light, and I could see people moving about in the field beyond the garden. I had also many thoughts about my new situation, and some suspicions that I should be put under restrictions which I did not like.

I had sat some time in this situation when my aunt looked into the room, and seeing me up, came forwards, saying, why are you not in bed, Susannah?

I replied, because I wanted to look out of the window a little.

But, did I not tell tell you, said she, to observe what your cousins did, and do the same?

I made no answer, but looked at her with some sullenness in my manner. There is one thing, Susannah, said my aunt, on seeing this, which I wish you to understand, and that is, that I will be obeyed in every, even the smallest point which I may require. I this evening bade you observe what your cousins did, and do the same. You have not thought proper to obey me; but as this is the first open act of disobedience of which you have been guilty, I shall for once excuse you; I however insist upon it, that you will now

get from your seat at the window, undress yourself, fold up your clothes, and go to bed.

I arose indeed, on hearing this, but determined not to obey with alacrity.

On this, my aunt very calmly took the seat which I had left, and seemed resolved to wait the issue of the affair. Having her eye upon me I undressed myself indeed, but put my clothes all rumpled into the drawer, not even making an attempt at folding them up.

When I had so done, I was preparing to get into bed, when my aunt rose, took me by the hand, and led me to the door. Where are you going to take me, aunt? I said, in some trepidation. I am going to take you into another room; I shall take you into little Charles's room, which is within mine, and bring the little boy here; I find that you are not at present a fit companion for your cousins; I must therefore separate you; and when I think that you have a better sense of your duty, I may, perhaps, trust you to be with them again. On hearing this I began to struggle and scream, and had actually forced my hand from my aunt's, when my uncle suddenly appeared at the head of the stairs, and threatened me with further punishment if I did not instantly do as my aunt desired. *desired*

Seeing this, I passed from crying and struggling to praying and entreating; but my aunt told me that she was not to be prevailed

on by any one of these; that I had proved myself an unfit companion for my cousins, and that I must take the consequence: so saying, she led me through her own room to a little closet, where, having lifted Charles out of the bed, she ordered me to take his place, and going out she locked me in.

And now how shall I describe the storm of passion to which I yielded; how shall I tell you how I sobbed, cried, stamped, and fretted, till, being wholly overcome with fatigue, I fell into a deep sleep, in which I remained till the sound of the morning hymn, issuing from the open window of my uncle's room, broke in upon my rest.

I can scarcely describe the feelings I experienced at that moment; I was weary and exhausted—I was ashamed of my bad conduct—I was grieved to think that I was not counted worthy of being the companion of my lovely cousins—and I felt that if I had been humbled and reproved, I had most thoroughly deserved what I had incurred. I knelt, and joining my hands, I earnestly besought my heavenly Father to change my heart and make me a new creature. Not that my prayer was uttered in those very words, which would have argued a more accurate knowledge of the doctrine of regeneration than I possessed at that time; but though the words might be different, the desire of my

heart was to the same effect, namely, that I might become a changed and altered character.

When the morning hymn had ceased, I heard my uncle's voice engaged in reading and prayer for a short time; after which my door was opened by a servant, who brought me my rumpled clothes, and having assisted me to dress, desired me to walk down into the breakfast room.

What! said I, with my eyes all swelled with tears, and in these tumbled clothes!

Your aunt desired that you might be called down, Miss Susannah, said the maid, and I had nothing to do but to deliver her message: so saying, she left me, and I went slowly down.

As I came to the foot of the stairs I met my cousin Lucy, who had been sent to fetch something for her papa, and as she passed me in haste, she said, beg pardon, dear Susannah, pray do.

I saw a tear in her gentle eye as she spoke, but she ran by me without waiting my reply; being thus kindly urged, what could I do, or what could I desire to do, but to obey her sweet commands, and I accordingly ran into the study, fell down on my knees before my aunt, and humbly implored her forgiveness. My child, said my aunt, stooping to raise me up, I do forgive you, from my heart I forgive you; but you must be obedient; you cannot



expect the divine blessing unless you obey your parents; and she kissed me and pointed to a chair by her side.

And now, said Emmeline, taking my hand, we are all happy again; and every lovely face around the table beamed with that feeling of delight, which angels are said to experience on the repentance of a sinner.

When breakfast was finished, my aunt took us into a small parlour next the study, in the centre of which was a table covered with green baize; the apartment being well stored with books, work-baskets, maps, and drawings, all arranged not only with neatness, but with the view to ornament.

We were all seated round this table, and my aunt having taken her place at one end, our tasks were appointed us, and we remained engaged till one o'clock, being differently occupied according to our various abilities. I perceived that my aunt, after having examined me, was by no means satisfied with my acquirements; however, she said little; and when I looked up in shame, after having made some very egregious blunder, I saw with surprise that Emmeline and Lucy, who were engaged in drawing, either did not, or would not, hear what I had said; for instead of the expression of triumph which I expected to see on their countenances, on discovering that their cousin was so much

inferior to themselves, I remarked only the same sweet composure and tenderness of aspect, which, young as I was, I felt that I could not sufficiently admire.

At one o'clock our liberty was given us, and when we had placed all those things which we had been using in their proper places, we were allowed, as the day was very hot, to play in a little room in one corner of the house, where my cousins kept their play-things.

In this room was a cupboard containing many compartments, where my cousins had fitted up a baby-house, and here were a variety of shells, mosses, and dried flowers, which they had collected. Emmeline and Lucy were at that time deeply engaged in arranging every variety of shells which could be found in the neighbourhood, and placing them in little compartments of pasteboard. I was surprised at the beauty and variety of these shells, and resolved immediately that I would also have my collection. We were occupied in this room till we were summoned to dress for dinner, and my aunt then very kindly permitted me to return to the place in my cousins' room, which had been first appointed me.

My cousins were dressed very plainly, but with extreme attention to neatness.

After dinner, as the heat continued to be

great, my aunt took us again into the little parlour and we sat down to our needles, reading by turns aloud; and as the book my aunt had selected for this purpose was a very interesting one, we passed an hour and a half in a most pleasant manner.

We were then called to tea, after which we all walked out together, as the hay was finished; and I was not a little delighted with the lovely regions through which my uncle led us. We passed through the grove of oaks, and many lovely green lanes, shaded on each side by orchards, passing by the doors of several thatched cottages whose inhabitants were all abroad, nor did we return till the sun had dipped its golden orb beneath the horizon.

Thus, with prayers, we finished our day, and I have since reflected on the wisdom of my aunt in losing no time in subduing my rebellious spirit, by which she procured for me at once that peace of mind which I otherwise could not have obtained.

I will not say that I never afterwards showed a restive spirit; this would be maintaining too much; but I can safely assert, that I never afterwards broke out with violence, and that I was instantly subdued when I saw that my aunt's displeasure was excited. I also made several attempts, I can recollect, to deceive her; but I had no sleeping guar-

dian to delude. Every attempt at deception was instantly detected, and I was much sooner convinced of the folly of endeavouring to mislead one so penetrating, than persuaded of the atrocious sin of lying.

I have described the gentle course of one summer's day in this happy family; neither were our winter days less pleasant; every changing season, in a pious family, brings new delights; how busy were we before Christmas in preparing coarse clothing for the poor, and little presents for the children; and I was made to understand that these were to be given at Christmas, on an occasion which I shall explain.

My uncle was, as I have before said, the rector of the parish; his parishioners were not many, and consisted only of a few farmers and about thirty families of cottagers. My uncle I found had an exact list of these families, with the numbers of their children, and other circumstances relative to them; and he had a peculiar and most desirable manner, in my humble opinion, of administering to the spiritual improvement of his people.

There was in the village an old-fashioned dame's school, and my uncle was by no means backward in his attentions to this school; but the principle on which he acted was not so much in encouraging and patronizing the school, as in holding forth excitements to such



parents as, without pecuniary assistance, provided for the proper instruction of their own children, and brought them regularly and decently to church. It is not so much any man's business as yours, he would say to the cottagers, to provide for the instruction of your children; Sunday schools are excellent things, but good fathers and mothers are better. Let me see each of you fathers on a Sunday at church, with your children in your hands, and be it your business to see that they behave well at church, and use their Bibles; each of you have one day in the week for instructing your children, and don't tell me that you cannot read; you may surely learn faster than your little children if you are so inclined; and I am ready to provide you with books and set you in the right way; rub up your catechisms and your spelling if you have ever learnt them, and try to make yourselves perfect in your Bibles; but supposing that you have never known even your letters, don't be out of heart. If you learn but two letters on a Sunday you will have them all in thirteen Sundays, and if in that time you have made your children well acquainted with the alphabet, you will have done something; the first step is a great deal, especially when we have God on our side, and you shall want no help from me. Make the best of your time at church, mark what is

said and read, and question your children upon them when you go home.

I have often heard my uncle say, that this new scheme of his, of turning all the parents into school masters and mistresses was much opposed at first, particularly by the farmers, who said it would never do; but my uncle followed it up, and exhorted the better sort of people to take each of them one or two of the poor families under their inspection, begging them to call on the cottagers in their neighbourhood, on a Sunday, and see how they were employed. Neither did he fail to exhort the parents in public and in private, and to use all his influence to bring about this kind of patriarchal instruction. He had indeed many difficulties and many disappointments, but at the time when I came to reside in the family the divine blessing seemed to have been poured out upon his labours. Most of the respectable housekeepers in the parish had taken one, two, or more cottagers under their inspection, and took occasion sometimes, during each Sabbath day, to visit these cottagers, and observe and direct what was passing in them. There were three farmer's daughters who had undertaken this blessed work, with several other respectable persons of inferior rank, who not only visited the cottagers, but observed whether their inhabitants were at church, and how the children con-

ducted themselves during the divine service. At Christmas, two or three days were wholly devoted by my uncle and aunt to inspecting the improvements of the children, and on these occasions whole families came to the parsonage, and were regaled with roast pork and plum-pudding; for a pig was always killed to supply the occasion; and then my uncle, having consulted the reports delivered to him by the visitors of the various cottages, either delivered his censures or the rewards which had been prepared; many of which last were contributed by the visitors who always joined the party at the parsonage on these great days of examination. My uncle's censures, however, when censures were necessary, were always gentle and affecting, and given to the parents apart from the children.

I have heard my aunt say that he, on these occasions, not unseldom brought tears into the eyes of the most hardened characters, by pleading to them the interests of their children, and that she knew several instances in which the very worst of men dated their conversion from these pleadings of my uncle; and that she has known many a man forsake the taverns on the sabbath day, merely with the view of obtaining the approbation of my uncle, and for the pleasure of seeing his children received with credit by the minister; and although these were but mere worldly

motives, yet we can not doubt, but that better feelings were afterwards vouchsafed these poor people through the infinite mercy of Almighty God.

But as these matters may be thought not precisely to refer to me, I shall enlarge no further on them, excepting to say, that the first occasion on which it ever entered into my head, that human creatures ought not to live solely to please themselves, was on witnessing the blessed effects of my uncle's labours with his poor people, and seeing the delight with which the poor parents received the rewards of their exertions for their children; for every poor person who brought a well-instructed child, and made it appear that he, or she, had not neglected, without reason, to bring his children to church, received a handsome garment, with other smaller presents.

I might fill volumes with the history of my uncle Darnley's interesting and happy family; and I may humbly add, my blessed transition in that family from a selfish, slovenly, ignorant, and unholy state, to one in which I was at least made to know and bewail my errors, and to desire those things which are better.

In point of acquirements, the time I had lost was never to be quite repaired; I never obtained the serene, peaceful, and graceful



manners of my Emmeline, nor the sparkling vivacity of my Lucy's deportment. I never was able to make so much of my time as they did, and I had stronger corruptions to contend with; for my passions, by long indulgence, had become more powerful; but this I had acquired—I could not do ill with an easy conscience, and I detested the sinful inclinations which too frequently arose to disturb my peace.

The happiest domestic scenes and the sweetest society on earth, must, in the course of time, be dissolved; and though the loss, by death, of those we love, is painful to flesh and blood, yet to a mind in a right frame, the consideration that they are passed into a state of everlasting glory, has a sweetness to the child of God which the world can never know.

Who amongst those who love the Lord, would recall the husband, the wife, the parent, or the dimpled infant, from the peaceful tomb, even were the power bestowed on him; and is not the departure of every friend a call on those who remain to follow onwards, and be ready to go whenever the moment may arrive? My uncle and aunt Darnley were not, however, taken from us till we, their children, were happily settled in life, with the exception of Charles; who, being still a youth when left an orphan, wanted not a home in his sisters' houses.

The tenderest friendship still subsists between me and Mrs. Darnley's children: but as my uncle Warner is no more, I see little of my other relations excepting William Talbot, who, not being a favourite at home, was placed for some years under the tutorage of his uncle Darnley, where he received such instruction as, with the divine blessing, confirmed all that was pleasing in his character, and corrected that which was amiss.

Of the rest of my uncle Talbot's family I say but little, lest some of my former prejudice should mingle itself with my account of them; certain it is that these, the children of careless parents have much to plead in their own behalf, if they do not become all their friends could wish; but humanly speaking, there is little hope for those, who in youth are accustomed only to seek self-gratification, and to live wholly to the present world.

And now, my young readers, I hope that you will be able from my simple narrative to learn this fact, that those persons are your best friends who do not permit you to give way to your own evil desires and propensities; and that of the two evils, that of excessive strictness is less injurious to youth than the contrary extreme, of carelessness and negligence; and if you are so happy as to be under the charge of a true and faithful guar-

dian, I trust that you will endeavour to profit by your advantages to the utmost, and recollect that a pious and careful parent cannot be offended without incurring the displeasure of that God, who has said,—

“Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”



Our narrative being now brought to a close, we would call upon all our readers, young and old, to reflect upon the importance of ordering our steps according to the commandments of God. If we do this, we shall be happy now and happy for ever. The individual, or the family, who does not “acknowledge God in *all* their ways, need not expect that he will direct their paths;” while he will delight to bless those who put their trust in him.

How then to secure most certainly, the hearts of children and youth for God, is a serious and important question; but it is answered in the holy scriptures; “*Train up a child in the way he should go.*” In some such way as the following, we may suppose, Susannah’s last guardian instructed his little family. We know, at least, that others have taken this method with great success.—

The questions, we hope, will be asked by the father of every child who reads this book.

Have you a father?

Is he dear to you?

What does he do for you?

What are your duties to him?

Which is called "the first commandment with promise?" Eph. vi. 2.

What is the promise? Ex. xx. 12. Deut. v. 16.

Where are we told that God peculiarly blessed filial obedience? Jer. xxxv. 18, 19.

Who *enables* your earthly father to do for you what he does?

Does *He* do *more* for you than your earthly parent?

What did He *first* do for you?

What does He do for you every day?

When you receive His gifts, ought you not to think of Him?

When you see the sun shine, may you not think it is your heavenly Father's sun?

And when you see the flowers bloom, of whose goodness should you think?

Who causes the corn to grow for your food?

Who preserves your life and health?

Could your earthly father give you food and clothing, unless your heavenly Father supplied him with them?



Your earthly parent may administer medicine to you in sickness, but who *blesses* the medicine?

And when you sleep, who takes care of you?

Who also takes care of your father?

Who has given your father a heart to love you and be kind to you?

May you not lose your earthly father?

But can you ever lose your heavenly Father?

And may not you *die*, and *leave* your earthly father?

But to whom may you *then* go?

And can *He* not make you much happier than any earthly parent?

Could an earthly parent give you *Heaven*?

And who sent a *Saviour* to redeem you?

Think then, how much, how very much, you should *love* God: you love your earthly father, and it is right you should do so; but you have reason to love your heavenly Father far more.

Look upon every thing you receive as the gift of your heavenly Father. When you awake in the morning, think, it is my gracious Father who has preserved me.—When you come to a meal, say within yourself—‘it is my heavenly Father who provides me with food.’—When you behold the sun enlivening the creation, when you see the flowers, the

birds, the various animals; or when on a fine evening you look up to the firmament, and see the moon and stars in their brightness—think, “these are my Father’s works.” Above all, let the exceeding love of God the Father, in sending His Son to die for you, move your heart to love Him—to love Him more and more.

We spoke of our heavenly Father: now tell me where you are taught to *call* upon your heavenly Father.

Repeat the first three petitions of the Lord’s prayer.—And are *others* likewise taught to call upon God?

May not every one upon earth, thus pray to God?

Yes: God would have “all men to be saved,” (1 Tim. ii. 4.) and, if we love God, it will be our delight to call Him “our Father”—to pray to Him as the Father of all. God has made an *innumerable* multitude of creatures: He is the Father of the seraph and of the worm—the Father of angels and men, but *especially* of His redeemed creatures by Jesus Christ. The redeemed are now made members of the family of heaven. (Rom. viii. 14. Gal. iv. 6.) May you, my children, know what it is to belong to the heavenly family!

And is not *each* of God’s creatures the subject of His care and providence?

Yes: God, who upholds the innumerable worlds of living creatures, takes as much care of *every one*, as if there were but *that one* in existence.

Should you not rejoice, that while He takes such care of *you*, so many *other* creatures experience His mercy and love?

*Ought* you to pray for all the souls which God has made?

And if our Father loves them, should not *you* love them?

You have been taught daily to repeat the Lord's Prayer. When you say "Our Father" pause an instant. Think of what you say. Seek to feel this prayer in your *heart*. It is not prayer to repeat *words* only, but you should really desire for yourself and others what is *meant* by the words.

And since God is a heavenly Father, ought not you to be His *heavenly* child? His child with heavenly dispositions?

Do you know the history of a son who left his father, and became very miserable? Read Luke xv. 11—24.

Did the lost son ever *return* to his father?

And what did the father do, when he *began* to return? Luke xv. 20, 22—24.

Was the father *very* merciful?

Will He not receive you?

Does He not now behold all with compassion?

My dear children, you are, by sin, in a state which is far removed from God. We have all, like lost sheep, gone astray from His fold, and wandered in the wilderness of this world. But God has sent to call us home, through the good Shepherd, the loving Saviour, who *laid down His life for the sheep*. As long as you continue impenitent, you remain at a distance from heaven and your Father—there is nothing upon earth that can afford you any lasting peace—all earthly pleasures are as unsatisfying as husks—when you come to a right mind, you will be miserable without the presence of God. The longer you delay to return to Him the harder it will become.—Now he invites you to return. You cannot doubt His love. He will hasten to meet you as the father in the parable. He will not reproach you. The angels will rejoice, the gates of paradise will be opened, the Lamb of God will intercede for you—you shall be admitted to the family of heaven. Retire to your chamber, and say from your heart, “I will arise, and go to my Father.” Often pray to Him, and say, *Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy child*. Make me one of Thy redeemed servants, through Jesus Christ. Amen.



What season of life is youth?

When it is past, does it ever return?

In what state is the *body* in youth?

Will it continue in this state?

In what state is the *mind* in youth?

What advantages have young persons?

How should bodily strength be employed?

How should the powers of the mind be improved?

Whom should we make "the guide of our youth?"

What Scripture exhortation is especially addressed to young persons? Eccles. xii. 1.

In what part of Scripture are counsels particularly given to the young? [See the early part of the book of Proverbs, especially chapters iii. and viii.]

Now read attentively Prov. i. 20—31.

In what season of life are impressions most easily made upon us?

What is meant by the command in Prov. iv. 23?

In what pursuit may young persons find the *highest* pleasure?

What *promise* is given to those who seek God early? Prov. viii. 17.

What does God particularly ask of young persons? Prov. xxiii. 26.

Do you know any instances in Scripture, of those who early sought God?

[Samuel—Josiah—Timothy.]

Are young persons sure of long life?

Do many *young* persons die? Ps. ciii. 15.

Yes: God alone knows the number of your days. Seek that *God may guide* your youth in the way of righteousness. Seek the knowledge and love of your Redeemer—"seek the Lord *while He may be found*, call upon Him *while He is near*." Let every day be begun with prayer, and spent in that fear of God, which "is the beginning of Wisdom." Seek to live *now*, as upon a *dying bed* you would wish you had lived.

"Think, O my soul, could dying men  
One lavish'd hour retrieve,  
Though spent in tears, and pass'd in pain,  
What treasures would they give!

"But seas of pearl, and mines of gold,  
Were offer'd them in vain:  
Their pearl of countless price is lost,  
And where's the promis'd gain?

"Lord, when thy day of dread account  
For squander'd hours shall come,  
Oh, let not this increase th' amount,  
And swell the former sum.

"Teach me, in health, each good to prize  
I, dying, shall esteem,  
And every pleasure to despise  
I *then* shall worthless deem."

*Mrs. Hannah More.*

Have you a Conscience? How do you know that you have a conscience?

Does it inwardly *speak* to you?

Does it ever give you pain? When?

Does it ever warn you not to do a thing?

Are you happy when you do *not* follow its dictates?

Do you know *why* you cannot be happy when you do not follow them?

Who gave you a conscience? Does *God* speak to you by it?

Should you be *very attentive* to His voice?

Does *God observe* when you follow your conscience?

When you read the scriptures does your conscience tell you what you read is holy and true?

[The teacher may lead the children to observe the corruption of their nature, which resists their conscience; for children, at an early age, often begin to feel, in their measure, that conflict of which the apostle speaks, occasioned by *a law in their members warring against the law of their minds*. He may explain that the more we attend to the dictates of our conscience, the more it will be preserved in a tender and impressible state.—He may ask such questions as the following.]

If your conscience tells you a thing is wrong, or hurtful to you, or if it tells you a

thing is right, and that it is also beneficial to you, why do you not always act accordingly?

Do you ever feel any *opposition* to your conscience?

What is it that opposes it?

Pray then to God to enable you to resist and overcome your evil nature: to give you strength to follow the dictates of your conscience.

If, at any time, your conscience has been peculiarly *impressed*, what ought you to do?

You ought to beseech God to strengthen and preserve the impression, and to enable you to act upon it. If you resist conscience, it will grow hardened; the more you seek to follow it, the more tender it will become.

THE END.









